1997-98 for the gauge conversion of Solapur (Hotgi)-Gadag section.

(b) No. Sir,

(c) Work on Hotgi-Solapur section has not been delayed. It is targetted for completion by December, 1998.

Construction of Over-Bridge on the Main Line in New Solapur

435. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to construct an over-bridge on the main line in New Solapur (Central Railway); if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether bridge under contemplation is a single lane bridge which but for heavy traffic would create a serious traffic bottleneck on it;

(c) whether there is a pressing public demand for a double track bridge in place of the contemplated single track bridge;

(d) what is the estimated cost of double track bridge and how far it exceeds that of the single track bridge; and

(e) what is Government's decision on this public demand?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes Sir, Two Raod Over Bridges are being built.

(i) One Road Bridge at Km. 456/4 between Solapur-Tikekarwadi stations, I Km. away from Solapur station.

(ii) Another at Km. 458/5 between same stations.

(b) (i) Road Over Bridge at Km. 456/4 is a 2 lane bridge over single line BG track and is being reconstructed as a 2 line bridge over double line BG track.

(ii) Road Over Bridge at Km. 458/5 is being rebuilt as single lane as 6 M wide (4.5m road way and 1.5 M footpath on one side). Civil Authorities (Municipal Corporation and District Magistrate) have considered single lane width as sufficient for the traffic.

(c) Yes, Sir, Local public and their elected representative have been demanding widening of this bridge.

(d) Rebuilding on Road Over Bridge as 2 lane is likely to cost Rs. 97 lakhs whereas reconstruction as per existing dimension will cost Rs. 64 lakh approximately Rs. 33 lakh more.

(e) If additional width of road over bridge is required to cater to increased traffic, the cost of this extra width is to be fully borne by the State Govt./Road Authority. Since the demand of the public is on account of increase in road traffic, the State Govt./Road Authority have to bear the extra cost. Railway will take prompt action if such a proposal is sponsored by State Govt./Local Body duly agreeing to bear their cost.

Telephone Facilities in Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express

436. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the capital cost estimated to be incurred in 1997-98 to instal telephone facilities in Rajdhani Express and *Shatabdi Express; and*

(b) the estimated outly proposed for providing drinking water facilities to rail passengers during the year;

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No capital cost will be incurred by the Railway in 1997-98 to instal telephone facilities in Rajdhani Express Train as Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) has agreed to give Satellite Telephones to Indian Railways on loan basis. However, there will be minor expenditure by Railway in fitment of antenna equipment cables etc. in the Pantry Car.

(b) All railway stations are provided with drinking water. This facility is improved/augmented whenever so

warranted by growth in passenger traffic. Allocation on this facility is not maintained separately.

Issuance of Platinum passes to the retired Railway Board members

437. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of RAILWAY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Platinum passes are being issued to the retired Board members;

(b) if so, the reasons for issuing them these privileges; and

(c) the measures proposed to provide more passenger amenties instead of providing more facilities to Railway Officers?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. However, they are issued Card Passes which have all the attributes of Platinum Pass.

(b) The facility of these passes has been extended to the retired Members of the Railway Board in recognition of their contribution to the Indian Railways.

(c) Provision of passenger Amenities/facilities is a continous process. However, issuance of passes to Railway Officers does not affect passenger amenities.

Rail Ticket Racket

438. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the 'Pioneer' of 24th June, 1997 under the caption "Rail Ticket racket busted";

(b) whether a number of such rackets are functioning in the country, particularly in Delhi/New Delhi causing a great inconvenience to the passengers for getting tickets and the persons working in railway booking offices are also engaged with them and selling tickets to the passengers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and action being taken/proposed to be taken against those persons who are involved in such bad practices and measures being taken by Government to stop these things in near future?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Some cases of touts and anti-social elements indulging in cornering of berths/seats have come to notice of Railways. Regular and surprise checks are conducted by the Commercial and Vigilance departments with the assistance of Railway Protection Force/Government Railway Police staff to check the activities of touts and other anti-social elements in and around the reservation offices. The drives against touts were intensified and during April to June, 1997, 174 touts were apprehended by Northern Railway. Action has been taken against them under the provisions of Railway Act, 1989. Railway staff found involved in or abetting such activities are severely taken up for penal action.

उत्तर रेलवे द्वारा फर्जी प्रमाण-पत्रों के आधार पर नौकरियां दिया जाना

439. **चौधरी चुन्नी लाल:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या अर्धकुम्भ मेला, 1982 के दौरान, मोबाइल टिकट कलेक्टर के रूप में कार्य करने वाले व्यक्तियों को फर्जी प्रमाण-पत्रों के आधार पर उत्तर रेलवे में नौकरियां दी गई हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो अब तक कितने लोगों को नौकरियां दी गई हैं; और

(ग) इन अवैधानिक नियुक्तियों के विरुद्ध क्या कार्रवाई की गई है/किए जाने का विचार है?

रेल मंत्री (श्री राम विलास पासवान): (क) जी नहीं।

(ख) और (ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठते।